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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **ENLISTED NAVY MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO RECEIVING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

FRESNO - United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that ERIK ALAN PETERSEN, 22 of Lemoore, California pleaded guilty before the Honorable Oliver W. Wanger to one count of receiving visual depictions of the sexual exploitation of minors.

The case is the result of an investigation by the Lemoore Police Department and the Fresno Office of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement with assistance from the Navy Criminal Investigation Service and the Kings County District Attorney's Office as part of Project Safe Childhood. Project Safe Childhood was launched to increase federal prosecutions of sexual predators of children, and to reduce the number of Internet crimes against children including child pornography trafficking. As a part of PSC, the United States Attorney's Office has teamed with state and local agencies and organizations to increase law enforcement presence on the Internet, and to educate the public about safe Internet use, thereby reducing the risk that children might fall prey to online sexual predators. For additional information on the PSC initiative, please go to [www.projectsafefchildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafefchildhood.gov) or call the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

According to Assistant United States Attorney David Gappa, who is prosecuting the case, PETERSEN admitted in a plea agreement that from approximately April 5, 2005, through December 6, 2006, he used a computer and modem to receive, by use of the internet, visual depictions of the sexual exploitation of minors. The offense involved material depicting prepubescent minors as well as images of minors engaged in sadistic or masochistic conduct or other violence. The defendant admitted that he received and possessed more than 600 images of the sexual exploitation of minors on computer hard drives, compact discs, or other storage devices.

PETERSEN has been serving on active duty at the Lemoore Naval Air Station in Lemoore, California. He was remanded into federal custody after his change of plea. PETERSEN has agreed to a prison term of no less than 97 months, and he will be required to register as a sex offender as a result of his conviction. He faces a maximum term of imprisonment of twenty years, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a potential lifetime term of supervised release when he is sentenced on October 15, 2007. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing

Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

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